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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 000353

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STATE FOR WHA/BSC KBEAMER

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PA](#)  
SUBJECT: IT'S OFFICIAL: PARAGUAY'S ELECTION RESULTS

REF: ASUNCION 268

Classified By: DCM Michael J. Fitzpatrick; reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: Paraguay's National Elections Tribunal released official election results May 24 and declared Fernando Lugo president-elect with 40.8 percent of the vote (reftel). Final results indicated that the current political opposition (including Liberals, National Union of Ethical Citizens Party, Beloved Fatherland Party, and others) will control 30 of 45 Senate seats, although the Colorado Party will remain the largest party in the Senate with 15 seats. In the Chamber of Deputies, the current political opposition will dominate with 50 of 80 deputies; the Colorado Party will have 30 deputies. The Colorados won nine of 17 department governorships; the Liberals (PLRA) won seven. Voters favored opposition parties and abandoned both the Colorados and the far left by a wide margin, including many dissatisfied Colorado voters who crossed party lines to vote for opposition candidates. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) The National Elections Tribunal (TSJE) released official election results May 24 and declared Fernando Lugo Mendez president-elect with 40.8 percent of the vote (766,502 of 1,874,127 total votes cast), 10.2 percent more than his nearest rival, Colorado presidential candidate Blanca Ovelar. Ovelar earned 30.6 percent of the vote (573,995 votes), followed by National Union of Ethical Citizens Party (UNACE) candidate Lino Oviedo with 21.9 percent (411,034 votes), and Beloved Fatherland Party (PPQ) candidate Pedro Fadul with 2.4 percent (44,060 votes).

¶3. (C) Election results indicated that the current political opposition will control 30 of 45 Senate seats, although the Colorado Party will remain the largest party in the Senate with 15 seats (a net loss of one seat). The Colorados won 27.2 percent of the Senate vote (509,907 votes), followed by the Liberals with 27.1 percent (507,413 votes), UNACE with 18 percent (336,763 votes), and PPQ with 8.1 percent (151,991 votes). (NOTE: President and Senator-elect Nicanor Duarte Frutos announced he will step down as president June 23 to swear in with the new Senate July 1. However, opposition parties are mounting a campaign to neutralize Duarte by either opposing his early resignation from the presidency or blocking him from taking the oath of office as senator. END NOTE.) The Liberal Party (PLRA), affiliated with Lugo's Patriotic Alliance for Change (APC), won 14 Senate seats (a net gain of two). UNACE won nine Senate seats (a net gain of four), and the PPQ won four Senate seats (a net loss of three). The National Solidarity Party (PPS), Tekojoja Movement, and the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) each won one Senate seat-- far short of the left's pre-vote hopes and expectations.

¶4. (U) In the 80-member Chamber of Deputies, the current political opposition will dominate with 50 deputies, but the Colorado Party will remain the largest party with 30 deputies (a net loss of 13 seats). Liberals won 27 seats (a net gain of eight); UNACE 15 seats (a net gain of ten); PPQ three seats (a net loss of six seats); APC two seats; PDP one seat; Tekojoja one seat; and the opposition Democratic Alliance of Boqueron (ADB), one seat. As in the Senate, the left fared poorly.

¶5. (U) Colorados won nine of 17 department governorships (a net loss of two governorships). The Liberals picked up one additional governorship for a total of seven, while the ADB won the gubernatorial race in Boqueron Department. Voters expressed an anti-incumbency sentiment by supporting six party changes, giving the Liberals four Colorado governorships and the Colorados two Liberal governorships.

¶6. (C) COMMENT: Voters favored center-left opposition parties and abandoned both the Colorados and the far left by a wide margin, including many dissatisfied Colorado voters who crossed party lines to vote for opposition candidates. The Liberals achieved near parity with the Colorados in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, and increased their number of governorships. UNACE also performed well largely based on the strength of Oviedo's presidential campaign. Oviedo led his UNACE party to gain several congressional seats (two members of his family are headed to the Senate, and two of his children will serve as deputies), which positions UNACE to play a key role as king maker in the new Congress. In spite of the current political opposition's decisive victory, the incoming Congress will be as divided as ever, with the Colorados -- still the country's largest political party -- and an enlarged confederation of opposition parties vying for political control. END COMMENT.

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